DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 292 972 CE 049 900

AUTHOR	Naylor, Michele
TITLE	Vocational Education-Job Training Partnership Act Coordination. ERIC Digest No. 68.
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Columbus, Ohio.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	88
CONTRACT	RI88062005
NOTE	4p.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Coordination; *Educational Legislation; Federal Legislation; Postsecondary Education; Program Content; *Program Development; *School Business Relationship; Secondary Education; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Carl D Perkins Vocational Education Act 1984; ERIC Digests; *Job Training Partnership Act 1982

ABSTRACT

Vocational educators, policymakers, and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) service providers are developing an increasing awareness of the educational and economic benefits of joint planning and coordination between vocational education and the JTPA. However, some basic differences between the goals, planning procedures, and operating practices of the public and private sectors have, in many cases, made efforts to establish and implement cooperative vocational education-JTPA programs difficult. For example, vocational education's concerns for long-term educational development and its mandate to serve the general in-school population stand in contrast to JTPA's focus on short-term training programs that concentrate on job- or employer-specific skill needs. Research has revealed several steps that employers and JTPA trainers alike can take to improve intersector coordination. These include improving communication through such strategies as holding joint conferences or hiring staff members with experience in the other delivery system, reducing the risk of performance-based contracts to educational institutions by providing partial payment for outcomes (such as course completion) over which educational institutions have more control than they do over employment outcomes, and supplementing on-the-job training to broaden the preparation of clients and increase their attractiveness to employers. A national study of joint planning during 1986 found little in the way of coordination during that particular year. A second study undertaken the following year was more encouraging, however. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED292972

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION-JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT COORDINATION

ERIC DIGEST NO. 68

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
The National Center for Research in Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090

CE049900

ERIC DIGEST NO. 68
Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION-JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT COORDINATION

In 1984, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act required state councils on vocational education to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of coordination between vocational education and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) regularly. Vocational educators, policymakers, and JTPA service providers alike are developing an increasing awareness of the educational and economic benefits of joint planning and coordination between vocational education and the JTPA. However, some basic differences between the goals, planning procedures, and operating practices of the public and private sectors have, in many cases, made efforts to establish and implement cooperative vocational education-JTPA programs difficult. This **ERIC Digest** reviews the barriers to coordination between vocational education and JTPA programs, strategies for overcoming them, the overall status of joint planning and coordination, and the results that can be obtained once the barriers to cooperative planning have been overcome.

What Are the Barriers to Coordination?

Kinoshita (1987) identified significant differences between vocational education and JTPA programs from the standpoints of administrative control, program goals, target group, clients' economic status, program structure, funding, curriculum or course of study, and evaluation outcomes.

Vocational education's concern for individuals' long-term educational development (with employability being only one aspect of this development) has resulted in vocational curricula that are highly structured, have relatively high standards, and rely on highly trained, tenured faculty. JTPA programs, on the other hand, are mandated to provide short-term skill training or other employability programs leading to immediate job placement and earnings gain. Consequently, they tend to be shorter, more flexible, geared toward less academically proficient students, narrower in focus (often tailored to meet the needs of a specific employer), and staffed by trainers who do not possess the credentials or certification of typical vocational education teachers.

As a mainstream institution, vocational education serves the general in-school population (including disadvantaged and disabled individuals), whereas JTPA programs must serve economically disadvantaged individuals (usually adults and out-of-school youth). The typical clients of vocational education are dependent on parents or guardians, whereas JTPA clients are usually self-supporting although they are often without steady incomes or dependent on public assistance programs.

Vocational education's comprehensive curriculum, with its co- and extracurricular activities, stands in sharp contrast to the specialized, concentrated, and short-term skill training typically provided under JTPA. Perhaps even more important are the significant differences between the evaluation outcomes used to assess the two types of programs. Vocational education is typically evaluated in terms of a wide range of outcomes (including whether students continue their education, the contributions of skill training to basic skills, students' mastery of basic life competencies, and employment outcomes), whereas JTPA programs place more emphasis on employment-related outcomes (earnings, employment status, relationship of training to job obtained, job satisfaction, employer satisfaction, programs' abilities to meet employers' needs).

All of these differences, coupled with the fact that vocational education receives primarily state and local funding, whereas the JTPA is federally funded, have created an array of barriers. They include "turf" issues (disputed roles and responsibilities); differing program eligibility, staffing, budgetary, matching funds, and reporting requirements; lack of coordination and understanding (both within and between the two systems); personal or philosophical differences among key administrators; inadequate understanding of the laws, roles, and procedures of the other system; differences in local service area boundaries; and the lack of a history of successful coordination (Lewis, Ferguson, and Card 1987).

How Can These Barriers to Coordination Be Overcome?

When this question was put to a national sample of JTPA administrators, they offered the following suggestions to vocational educators: improve communication, keeping the Service Delivery Area (SDA) informed about programs; have joint meetings and do more joint planning; be more responsive to labor market needs; upgrade and update programs; put more emphasis on placemen; of JTPA participants; be more flexible and responsive to the needs of JTPA, offer more short-term and open-entry/open-exit programs, and be less defensive; become better informed about JTPA; improve relationships among state agencies and between state and local agencies; coordinate better within vocational education itself; fund programs jointly; accept performance-based contracts; and serve those outside the normal school population (Lewis 1987).

A national sample of vocational educators responded with the following recommendations to JTPA administrators: expand their concept of training, shifting focus from on-the-job training to more in-depth instruction; reduce documentation and paperwork to simplify the process of serving JTPA clients; conduct more joint planning; keep an open mind when selecting service providers; and reduce the political influence on private industry council decisions (Lewis 1987).

In the first annual report on joint planning and coordination of programs conducted under the Perkins Act and JTPA, Lewis, Ferguson, and Card (1987) concluded that federal policymakers should consider reserving a portion of the funds authorized under both JTPA and the Perkins Act to be distributed upon approval of a joint plan submitted by the state agencies responsible for administering the acts. They suggested that state administrators (1) establish agreements for representatives from vocational education and JTPA to serve on each

ERIC is sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education

other's planning teams or (2) call upon third-party assistance to improve the relationships between vocational education and JTPA program providers. On the local level, they recommended that Private Industry Councils recruit influential vocational educators as members.

Lewis et al. (1987) also suggested that state and local administrators from both systems consider taking the following direct actions (which do not require any changes in legislation or regulations):

- Improve communication through joint conferences, membership on councils or committees, and addition of staff members who have had experience with the other system.
- Reduce the risk of performance-based contracts to educational institutions by providing partial payment for outcomes, such as course completion, over which the institutions have more control than they do over employment.
- Supplement on-the-job training with classroom training to broaden the preparation of clients and increase their attractiveness to employers.

What Is the Overall Status of Joint Planning and Coordination?

There appeared to be very little joint planning during 1986. Although a large proportion of JTPA clients (especially in rural areas and smaller cities) was being served by public vocational education, there was little coordination between vocational education and JTPA providers. Rather, JTPA providers tended to find what they considered to be suitable training programs and contracted to have their clients participate in the vocational programs (Lewis, Ferguson, and Card 1987).

The second annual report was more encouraging, however. Ninety-seven percent of the SDAs surveyed engaged in some type of collaborative effort with public vocational education institutions in the program year ending in June 1987. Ninety-one percent of the SDA administrators described their relationship with public vocational-technical schools as satisfactory or better, with 71 percent describing their relationship as good, very good, or excellent. Almost 90 percent of the postsecondary institutions studied have some relationship with JTPA; 68 percent provide direct services, and an additional 19 percent provide facilities or instructors for JTPA programs that they do not conduct themselves (Lewis 1987).

Examples of Successful Joint Programs

Joint programs at the secondary level. Kinoshita (1987)suggested that, in view of secondary vocational education's highly structured nature, extra- and cocurricular activities, and commitment to serving the entire in-school population (without special emphasis on any one special needs group), the relationship between secondary vocational education and JTPA is best limited to one in which comprehensive secondary schools function as JTPA service recipients rather than service providers. The following types of joint programs, in which JTPA resources are targeted toward in-school vocational students, can allow vocational education and JTPA providers to collaborate, if not coordinate, to meet mutual goals: dropout prevention programs for alienated youth; school-to-work transition programs to assist students with career counseling and guidance, job placement, and employability skills; work-study and summer employment programs for students needing financial assistance; partnership programs that promote involvement of business and industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, and government (as employer) with education; and cooperative education, experience-based education, and other types of work experience programs (Kinoshita 1987).

The remedial education program in the Escambia County School District in Florida is one such joint program. Under the program, the local Private Industry Council and the Florida Department of Education provided funds for the purchase of a computer system and software to address basic and remedial education for JTPA-eligible youth and adults for day and evening sessions, respectively. The JTPA agency has a performance-based contract according to which the school receives $117 for every 1.5 grade-level increase in basic skills for in-school, at-risk youth (Lewis, Ferguson, and Card 1987).

Joint programs at the postsecondary level. Kinoshita (1987) observed that, because they frequently offer a variety of completion objectives (degrees and certificates) and because they are willing to accept students who have limited learning objectives, postsecondary vocational institutions (especially community colleges) hold more promise for developing programs that are jointly funded by the Perkins Act and JTPA. He suggested two roles for the community college—development of occupational skill centers to provide job-specific skills training and development of a dual system in which a "training arm," offering on-site job training, functions side by side with the institution's traditional vocational education program.

In the Central Pennsylvania Industry Education Consortium, an industry-education coordinator, who functions as part of an economic development team, facilitates industrial training by arranging class-size training with an educational institution and applying for state-appropriated training funds for customized training in occupations in which there are not enough trained workers. Information on business contacts and training opportunities is also shared (Lewis, Ferguson, and Card 1987).

REFERENCES

Kinoshita, Daniel Y. *Philosophical Issues, Examples of Coordination, Recommendations. Vol. 1 of Vocational Education and the JTPA: Assessing the Partnership.* Honolulu: Hawaii State Council on Vocational Education, 1987.

Lewis, Morgan V. *Vocational Education-Job Training Partnership Act Coordination. Second Annual Report.* Columbus: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1987.

Lewis, Morgan V.; Ferguson, Marilyn; and Card, Michael. *Vocational Education-Job Training Partnership Act Coordination. First Annual Report.* Columbus: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1987. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 284 075).

This **ERIC Digest** was developed in 1988 by Michele Naylor, ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under Contract No. RI88062005. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the Department of Education. Orders for National Center publications should be sent to the Publications Office, Box E, or call (614) 486-3655 or (800) 848-4815.

THE NATIONAL CENTER
FOR RESEARCH IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
1960 KENNY ROAD • COLUMBUS, OHIO 43210